flank can be used. But in such cases—moving along the front of a mountain range, for example—adequate stream drainage should provide enough terrain features for a leader to use in conventional terrain-following techniques.

In the proposed system, a leader can send encrypted grid coordinates by radio for the point pairs to connect, along with the name of the phase line. Then, his subordinates can post their maps accurately from the radioed information. This can be critical if an operation is especially successful and a breakthrough operation or pursuit takes a unit rapidly beyond its planned graphics.

This ability to transmit control measures could well allow commanders in an operation to exploit success rapidly while maintaining control of the successful unit. Under such conditions, boundaries could be designated as: "Ridge, NK123456 to NK124987, and ridge NK208439 to NK201975" and the phase lines could be filled in as follows: "PL Orange NK041522 to NK225498, PL Pink NK124618 to NK206597," and so on.

This would require either encryption or a secure radio net, of course, and the transmission times would be slightly longer than might be desirable, but only the phase lines that were needed immediately would be transmitted each time. Then, once the next to last line had been reached, two or three more phase lines would be transmitted. Realistically, at some point even the most successful unit would have to stop to resupply and rest, and at this point, additional, more inclusive graphics could be brought forward.

This system isn't a cure-all, but it is simple, and it can be readily adapted to normally featureless wide-open terrain in which position location is often difficult at best.

I have found it useful for desert warfare, where clear skies and limited vegetation allow the horizon to be seen from a long distance. Any leader who conducts operations in a location that favors this technique may want to try it.

Captain David G. Tatman has served in several platoon leader and battalion staff assignments in Korea. He has been a company executive officer and company commander in Hawaii, and is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Advanced Course. He is assigned to an infantry observer controller team at the NTC.

The Three M's of Morale

MAJOR CHARLES F. COFFIN III

We see, hear, and use slogans every day. The trouble with these slogans is that the good ideas they express quickly become just trite phrases, and we forget what they really mean.

Take "Leading and Caring," for instance. This excellent slogan was intended to remind us of the things we were taught early in our careers, but it quickly became "lead'n-n-care'n," and then just a blur of sound that we repeated, but paid little attention to.

Nobody is immune to the danger of forgetting the meaning of such slogans, but several years ago I came up with something that has helped me. I don't know when or where I developed this idea (and if I got it from someone else, I hereby acknowledge the debt), but for quite a few years I have been using what I call "The Three M's." I firmly believe that if a company commander can keep these Three M's straight, he can alleviate a good many of the troop problems in his unit.

The first of the Three M's is Meals. Always serve the best meal possible, given the tactical circumstances. Serve hot Class A's whenever possible and when not precluded by the training itself.

If you're running a Ranger team—in combat or in training—you probably can't serve that team hot meals, nor should you. And if you're running a survival exercise in which you want your people to live on snakes and bugs, fine. No one is going to be hurt by not eating much for 48 to 72 hours, *if that is the point of the exercise.*

If your company is one of those that are forward in the attack, MREs (meals, ready to eat) are fine. But if it's one of the companies forward in a static defense, you probably should be serving hot meals. And if your company is in reserve in the defense, I can't think of any reason why you should *not* be serving decent meals. Sure, it's a little more trouble, but your troops deserve no less.

It isn't a matter of coddling them. You know that the best training, the toughest training, is when you're so tired your teeth ache and your eyeballs burn. You feel you can't go on much longer, but you do. Your troops can't go much farther, but you ask them to go on—and they do. But what's the point of feeding them MREs when it has nothing to do with the tactical play? You've heard them say, "I don't have to practice to be miserable," and there's some truth to that, at least where food is concerned. The idea of feeding MREs just because you're in the

field doesn't make sense. So give your soldiers as good a meal as possible.

Pay attention to what your mess crew is serving and how they are serving it. Too many times I've stood in the rain watching the food on my paper plate blend together into an unpalatable mess because the people who set up the serving line didn't care where they put it.

Organize the serving line, even in inclement weather and consider how many servers you have. You can get a company-sized serving line under a shelter made of eight or ten poncho liners. You might be able to rig up a temporary eating area the same way, depending on the tactical situation. At least it's worth thinking about.

You may even enjoy your own meal a bit more, if you have time to eat it—after all your troops have gone through the line.

The second of the Three M's is Mail. Get your people their mail as quickly as humanly possible. There are some missions, of course, during which you probably can't get mail to your soldiers. This might include some Ranger missions, for example. But you can have it waiting for them on the extraction helicopter—or at the very least, at the first base where they off-load (not at the final one, if the trip has several legs).

On a two-week FTX, you might feel the soldiers can go that long without mail. And they probably can. But why should they? So long as it is not tactically necessary to keep their mail from them, get it to them as quickly as you can. It should be delivered daily—no delays! Make it the First Sergeant's job—or the XO's.

As with meals, it can be a real pain to coordinate the delivery of mail during a field exercise, especially with all the tactical play you have, the battalion commander breathing down your neck, and too many things to do and not enough time or people to get them done. It's easy to let the mail slide. But in the long run, you can't afford to make the troops wait for it.

Often, the only thing a young soldier has to think about on an exercise is how lonely and miserable he is. He may never have been away from home before, or he may have a wife and family he's worried about. Their mail to him can make a difference. He needs to know that they are all right, that they are making it until he returns, or that they are thinking about him.

In fact, mail can make a difference to all of us, no matter what our rank. You may have been lonely and miserable yourself at times. I have. In basic training, in AIT, in Vietnam, in OCS, and lots of other times and places, some of them fairly recent. You can act tough—I always did—and say it doesn't matter, but you know it does. And if it's important to you, it's important to your troops, whether they let you know it or not.

The third of the Three M's is Money. Never allow a pay problem to go unresolved. You can task the First Sergeant to take care of it, but it's *your* responsibility. Follow it up.

The money that is paid to your young soldiers and junior NCOs is not all that great for what you sometimes ask them to do. They often live a hand-to-mouth existence, especially at some of the more expensive duty stations. If the pay people make a mistake and "short" an officer or senior NCO $100 or so, he should be able to get by for a couple of months until he can get it straightened out. But to the young soldier, a pay error of $100 is a major disaster. He's too young to have much of a savings account built up (if he has anything at all), and he's probably just starting a family at a time when he can least afford it (just as we did). And he doesn't have the clout to get the problem straightened out quickly. Therefore, you, the commander, must provide him with that clout and get his pay fixed fast.

In fact, it is in your own self-interest to do so. If the soldier is out in the field and worrying that his wife can't pay for the baby's medicine or that the car is broken down and she can't get it fixed to get the baby to the doctor, his mind is not going to be on his job. If his mind is not on his job, he's an accident waiting to happen. And that's going to cause far more paperwork than fixing the pay problem would have.

It may be worse in Reserve Component units. I was once assigned as a training officer to a major Army Reserve command where it was standard for senior officers—majors to colonels—to spend two or three hours of a week-end drill trying to correct their own pay problems. And if the officers have that many problems, what is it like for the privates and corporals?

It might be argued that Reservists, being "only" part-time, can afford pay problems better than the Active Army

can. I doubt it, but even in cases where this is true, pay problems certainly affect retention.

It may sometimes seem like the people in charge of paying the troops just don't care. (Parachute riggers take a vow that they will jump with any parachute they have packed. If they have made a mistake, they will pay for it. Perhaps pay personnel should take a similar vow—if they make an error in a soldier's pay, the amount will come out of their pay until it's corrected.)

But as a commander, you have to care. If "the commander is responsible for everything his men do or fail to do," then you are responsible if one of your people fails to get paid. And so is everybody else in the chain of command. You have to force the issue and go to the next higher commander, if necessary, and your First Sergeant should also be helping and pushing. Active or Reserve, if there is a pay problem, it's got to be fixed, and fixed fast.

These, then, are my Three M's—Meals, Mail, Money. There are certainly other things a commander must do to take care of his people, but I firmly believe that if you keep these three areas straight, you will have gone a long way toward establishing credibility with your troops. You will have troops who will do anything for you, will follow you anywhere, because you have demonstrated that you will do what you have to do to take care of them. In short, you will have gone a long way toward creating a fourth M—Morale.

"Meals, Mail, and Money" is not just a cliche, and you mustn't let it become one. It's real and it's important. Maybe remembering the Three M's will help you remain conscious of more than just the slogan.

Major Charles F. Coffin III was commissioned Infantry in 1974 and recently transferred to Special Forces. He has served as an enlisted man and an officer in Ranger, Special Forces, airborne infantry, and other assignments, including one tour in Vietnam. He has served in the Active Army, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve, and has been in Active Guard Reserve status since 1981. He was recently selected to attend the Marine Corps Command Staff College at Quantico, Virginia.

The Company XO

CAPTAIN RICHARD D. HILL

In addition to providing "beans and bullets," a company executive officer (XO) has numerous other responsibilities and duties within a company—duties many of the soldiers in the company may not be aware of. In conjunction with the first sergeant and the commander, he provides those soldiers with the resources they need to conduct meaningful training in the field or in garrison.

A new company XO himself may not know the full extent of his duties. The Army has published many manuals, circulars, and pamphlets describing the duties of the company commander, the first sergeant, the squad leaders, and the platoon leaders. But no manual clearly defines the responsibilities and duties of the XO at the company level. The reason for this may be that many of an XO's duties in a company are prescribed by the individual commander to fit his own requirements. But the basic duties and responsibilities of an XO do not change. (See also "Man Without A Manual: The Executive Officer," by Major John R. Galvin, INFANTRY, March-April 1965, pages 53-61, and "The Company XO," by Lieutenant Colonel John R. Galvin, INFANTRY, November-December 1969, pages 34-42.)

The XO can be the one person at company level who truly communicates the commander's policies and orders. The first sergeant and the platoon leaders also have a role in this, of course, but nobody has a closer relationship with the commander than the XO.

Since the XO is the senior lieutenant in the company and has probably worked with the chain of command for some time, he probably knows a great deal about the first sergeant and the platoon sergeants and has come to know the platoon leaders through both professional and social interaction. And, as the senior lieutenant, he also probably has a feel for the commander's personality and the way he likes to conduct business. His input is essential to the commander's decision making process.

His advice to the platoon leaders is particularly important. They will come to him with ideas and suggestions before going to the commander. Some commanders make it a policy to have the platoon leaders brief the XO first on a training plan or presentation to smooth any rough edges before bringing it to him.

Knowing the commander's likes and dislikes, therefore, he can help steer the platoon leaders in the right direction. He can do this by holding informal sessions